Production costs of Paper produced by National Newsprint and Paper Mills Limited

*238. SHRI KAMAL MORARKA: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the production costs of National Newsprint and Paper Mills Limited are higher than the prices of imported newsprint:

(b) if so, what are the factors responsible for higher production costs:

(c) whether it is also a fact that the quality of paper is inferior to that of imported paper: and

(d) if so, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF INDUSTRY (DEPARTMENT OF INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT) WITH ADDITIONAL CHARGE OF THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF INDUSTRY (DEPARTMENT OF HEAVY INDUSTRY) (SMT. KRISHNA SAHI): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) (i) Inferior raw-material resulting in greater use of chemicals.

(ii) high cost of power.

(iii) Smaller size of operations.

(iv) excess manpower, and

(v) old plant and machinery.

(c) and (d) Yes, Sir. The quality of raw material available in NEPA is inferior as compared to Coniferious Soft Wood available abroad and many foreign countries have more advanced technology, automation, instrumentation etc.

Production capacity of salt units

*239. SHRI KRISHAN LAL SHARMA: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) the number of salt manufacturing companies working in the country at present:

(b) the details of their location and production capacity of each company:

(c) wheher it is a fact that their production capacity is enough to meet the domestic requirements and to meet the export targets: and

(d) if so, the reasons for giving permission to a foreign company to set up a salt manufacturing plant at an Island of strategic importance for the country?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF INDUSTRY (DEPARTMENT OF INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT) WITH ADDITIONAL CHARGE OF THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF INDUSTRY (DEPARTMENT OF HEAVY INDUSTRY) (SMT. KRISHNA SAHI): (a) The number of licensed salt manufacturing units in the country is 2897.

(b) This information is not centrally maintained.

(c) Yes, Sir.

(d) A letter of permission has been issued to M/s. Cargill Southeast Asia Ltd., Singapore to set up a 100% Export Oriented Unit in Kutch District of Gujarat with an annual capacity of 10 lakh tonnes of solar salt with the condition that the entire (100%) production will be exported. This project is expected to earn substantial foreign exchange and generate employment.

'Statistical power regression model' for accurate forecasts about monsoon behaviour

*240. SHRI SARADA MOHANTY:
SHRI SOM PAL:

Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Indian Meteorological Department has perfected a "Statistical power regression model" for making accurate forecasts about monsoon behaviour in the country:

(b) if so, what has been the cost of the project and the investment on the super computer that has been used to develop this model of forecasting the monsoon:

(c) what have been the broad aims and objects of this exercise:

(d) whether it has any use for India's agriculture: and

(e) if so, what are the reasons that the Finance Ministry has asked the IMD to dispense with these forecasts?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY, DEPARTMENT OF ELECTRONICS AND DEPARTMENT OF OCEAN DEVELOPMENT AND THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS (SHRI P. R. KUMARAMANGALAM): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) This model has been developed as a part of the programme of India Meteorological

Department in the field of long range seasonal prediction of monsoon rainfall. No separate financial investment has been made for this purpose. The computations relating to the model did not require the use of the Super Computer.

(c) The Statistical Power Regression model was developed to improve the Long Range Forecasting of Southwest monsoon rainfall. it aimed at predicting in advance the total rainfall for the country as a whole for the entire Southwest monsoon season extending from June to September and is issued by the end of May every year.

(d) Such forecasts are useful for advance micro-planning of agriculture related activities.

(e) These forecasts have not been discontinued. Finance Ministry has not asked the India Meteorological Department to dispense with these forecasts.

Reprocessing of waste fuel from T.A.P.P.

2064. SHRI G. G. SWELL : Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state :

(a) whether Government propose to reprocess the waste fuel from the Tarapur Atomic Power Plant;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) whether U.S. Government has pointed out that India cannot reprocess the waste fuel from the Plant under the Agreement ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE PRIME MINISTER'S OFFICE (SHRI BHUVNESH CHATURVEDI) : (a) and (b) The Tarapur Atomic Power Station (TAPS) is presently operating on enriched uranium fuel. In the absence of enriched uranium, TAPS could be operated on mixed uranium—plutonium oxide (MOX) fuel for which the technology has been developed indigenously. To obtain plutonium required for this MOX fuel, the Government proposes to reprocess the spent fuel from TAPS.

(c) The Agreement for Co-operation between the Government of the United States of America and the Government of India concerning the civil uses of Atomic Energy of 8th August, 1963, provides for the reprocessing of the spent fuel produced in TAPS in Indian facilities upon a "joint determination" of the parties of the safeguardability of the reprocessing plant. Subsequently, the safeguarding responsibility was transferred to the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) by a trilateral Agreement signed between India, USA and IAEA in 1971. In 1980, India and IAEA concluded Subsidiary Arrangements on the safeguarding midalities for the reprocessing plant. Since the Safeguarding responsibility under the agreement of 1963 was transferred to IAEA with the concurrence of USA and IAEA is satisfied about the safeguardability of the reprocessing plant at Tarapur, we have maintained that the need for a "joint determination" between India and USA has been obviated. However, this position has not been accepted by the U.S. Government.

Increased cost of Kaiga Atomic Power Station and Rajasthan Atomic Power Project

2065. MISS SAROJ KHAPARDE : Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state :

(a) whether the cost of Units III and IV of the Rajasthan Atomic Power Project, under construction at Kota and the costs of the Kaiga Atomic Power Station under construction in Karnataka have gone up sharply from the original sanctioned costs;

(b) if so, the details thereof and the reasons therefor; and

(c) what corrective action Government had taken or propose to take in the matter ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE PRIME MINISTER'S OFFICE (SHRI BHUVNESH CHATURVEDI) : (a) and (b) The Project Kaiga Atomic Power Station Units 1 & 2 was sanctioned in June 1987 based on a cost estimate of Rs. 730.72 Crores. The Units 3 & 4 of the Rajasthan Atomic Power Station were sanctioned in November 1986 based on a cost estimate of Rs. 711.57 Crores. The original cost estimates did not include Interest During Construction (IDC) because they were sanctioned prior to the formation of the Nuclear Power Corporation of India Limited (NPCIL) in September 1987. The present anticipated cost of the Kaiga project is Rs. 1590 Crores excluding the IDC now estimated at Rs. 685 Crores. The present anticipated cost of Rajasthan 3 & 4 Units is Rs. 1450 Crores excluding Rs. 657 Crores which is the estimated interest during construction. The major reasons for increase in the costs apart from IDC are, increased escalation, changes in the scope of work due to design improvements and safety requirements, increase in taxes and duties and variation in the exchange rate.